(b) to (d) As per information received from the State Government of Orissa, no specific instances have been brought to their notice.

Smart Card for Employees in EPFO

1304. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Employees Provident Fund Organisation is planning to introduce a smart card to enable the employees to get their dues within a few days of retirement;

(b) if so, whether this card would be valid in any Provident Fund office; and

(c) what are other essential details of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) The modernisation programme of Employees Provident Fund Organisation involves re-engineering of the existing work process, re-tooling of the accounting systems and setting up a of an information technology/computer enabled system through networking of all offices of EPFO. It envisages providing all services to every member from any EPF location on a real-time basis and to reduce the time between the receipt of **a** claim to the issue of the cheque to 2-3 days as against the present stipulated time of 30 days.

The programme involves development of appropriate application software of supporting the allotment of Nationally Unique Indentification Number to the members. The process of registration of members and generation of Nationally Unique Numbers will be done through in-house computer systems. The work of allotment of Smart Card will follow once the exercise of allotment of Nationally Unique Identification Number is complete. This system will enable the subscriber to access his account balance and file his claim from any of the EPF Offices as against the present system which limit him only to one office where he is registered.

Creation of more jobs in Assam

1305. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of candidates registered in Employment Exchanges in Assam as on 31st October, 2001;

(b) whether Government have taken some steps for creation of more jobs in the State for the educated unemployed youth; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) The number of jobseekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, on the live register of the employment exchanges in Assam as on 31.8.2001 was of the order of 15 lakh.

(b) and (c) The Ninth Plan had accorded priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty. The plan had focused on sectors, sub-sectors and technologies which are labour intensive in regions characterised by higher rates of unemployment and underemployment.

A special group has been set up by Planning Commission to suggest measures to generate one crore employment opportunities during each year of the Tenth Five Year Plan.

All these will help generation of employment for the all unemployed including educated unemployed, in the State of Assam as well.

E.P.F. Scheme

1306. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether many establishements, at present with the working strength of more than 20 workers, are still outside the purview of the EPF scheme;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to give benefit of the social security scheme to these workers; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government to de-link the Employee's Pension Scheme from the EPF scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) Employees Provident Fund & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 is applicable to 180 industries/establishments as specified in Schedule I of the Act and in which 20 or more persons are employed. Continuous efforts are made to cover the establishments, which satisfy the requirement for coverage under the Act. Where any instance of non-compliance is detected, legal and penal action is taken as per the provisions of the Act.